

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LOME 03003 301837Z

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 INR-07 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00

INRE-00 SSO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

USIE-00 L-02 /067 W

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O R 301620Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8685

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOME 3003

CASABLANCA FOR RCAA

LAGOS FOR FAA

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ML, UV, EAIR, TO

SUBJ: GRUMMAN CRASH: PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S COMMENTS

REF: (A) LOME 2997; (B) LOME 2988 (NOTAL)

1. I ACCOMPANIED MESSRS LEMLEIN AND ANCKNER OF GRUMMAN AND
CHAPIN OF PAGE TO SEE PRESIDENT EYADEMA AT 0700 HOURS TODAY.
TRANSPORT MINISTER MIVEDOR ONLY OTHER PARTICIPANT IN THIRTY-FIVE
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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LOME 03003 301837Z

MINUTE DISCUSSION.

2. FOLLOWING EXCHANGE OF CONDOLANCES, PRESIDENT TOLD VISITORS HE HAD FIRST SET FOOT IN HIS GRUMMAN GULFSTREAM TO VISIT MALI AND UPPER VOLTA TWO WEEKS AGO IN ROLE OF MEDIATOR IN MALIAN-UPPER VOLTAN BORDER DISPUTE. WHILE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES HAD BEEN AGREED, FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE OF DISPUTE REMAINED. MEDIATION COMMISSION HAD BEEN FORMED OF FOUR STATES, INCLUDING TOGO, WITH VIEW TO ACHIEVING COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE. THIS REQUIRED THAT PRESIDENT BE FREE TO MOVE QUICKLY. EYADEMA SAID HE FELT "INCAPACITATED" NOW WITHOUT GULFSTREAM.

3. EYADEMA REQUESTED NEW GULFSTREAM II ASAP. GRUMMAN REPRESENTATIVES PROMISED TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY WITH OTHER CLIENTS, BUT ESTIMATED IT MIGHT BE MORE THAN ONE YEAR BEFORE REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT WOULD BE AVAILABLE. THEY EXPLAINED THAT, AT TIME GOT ORDERED PLANE, ONE ALREADY WAS UNDER CONSTRUCTION FOR ANOTHER CLIENT WHO SUBSEQUENTLY CANCELLED ORDER, THEREBY FREEING PLANE FOR EYADEMA. NOW, HOWEVER COMPANY HAS RECEIVED ORDERS FOR VIRTUALLY ENTIRE PRODUCTION FOR 1975.

4. COMPANY REPS THEN SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY OF LEASE ARRANGEMENT. ANCKNER THOUGHT THAT WITHIN TWO WEEKS AFTER RETURNING TO US HE COULD LEARN WHAT WAS AVAILABLE FOR LEASE AND WHEN IT COULD BE DELIVERED. EYADEMA WAS AGREEABLE, BUT REITERATED HIS CONCERN OVER HIS LACK OF MOBILITY TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS ON MALIAN-UPPER VOLTAN PROBLEM.

5. EYADEMA SAID IT WAS UNBELIEVABLE ACCIDENT COULD HAVE HAPPENED AND SUGGESTED PILOT HEARTATTACK. I MENTIONED AUTOPSY WOULD BE PERFORMED ON FLEMING TODAY. THIS CONNECTION, GRUMMAN REPS SOUGHT PRESIDENT'S WISHES RE CREW ON REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT. EYADEMA SAID HE WANTED GRUMMAN ITSELF TO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORMING AND DIRECTING ALL-AMERICAN FLIGHT CREW OF THREE, I.E., PILOT, COPILOT, MECHANIC.

6. PRESIDENT INQUIRED WHETHER GRUMMAN DEMONSTRATOR AIRCRAFT, IN WHICH COMPANY REPS FLEW TO TOGO, HAD SPACE FOR TOGOLESE REPRESENTATIVE TO ACCOMPANY COMPANY REPS BACK TO US. EARLIER IN CONVERSATION, VISITORS HAD OFFERED TO MAKE DIRECT CONTACT WITH GOT THROUGH ITS EMBASSY WASHINGTON TO CONVEY INFORMATION.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 LOME 03003 301837Z

MATION TO PRESIDENT CONCERNING LEASE AND/OR REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT.) I DID NOT INTERPRET FOR PRESIDENT ANCKNER'S REPLY THAT IT WOULD BE EASIER IF PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE FOLLOWED LATER, BUT RATHER SUGGESTED THAT COMPANY ACCOMMODATE EYADEMA. GRUMMAN REPS AGREED AND ADVISED PRESIDENT HIS REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE WELCOME TO FLY WITH THEM TO US.

7 PRESIDENT ALSO SAID, IN RESPONSE TO CHAPIN'S QUERY, THAT HE HAD

BEEN FULLY SATISFIED WITH INTERIOR CONFIGURATION, ARRANGEMENTS AND COLOR SCHEME OF NEW GULFSTREAM II AND WOULD WISH TO HAVE SAME FOR REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT.

8. COMMENT: PRESIDENT EYADEMA TODAY EXEMPLIFIED CALM AND COM-PASSIONATE REACTION WE HAVE ENCOUNTERED AMONG GOT OFFICIALS AND OTHERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE BEEN IN CONTACT SINCE GULFSTREAM CRASHED FRIDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 27. WITH RHETORIC OVER POLITICALLY-INSPIRED SAKAKAWA MYTH IN CRESCENDO THROUGHOUT TOGO, I HAD SOME MISGIVINGS - MORE ABOUT INITIAL POPULAR REACTIONS TO, RATHER THAN GOT'S INTERPRETATION OF, THIS ACCIDENT. ACCORDINGLY, REQUESTED AMERICAN MISSION PERSONNEL TO REMAIN AT HOME SATURDAY. THIS RESTRICTION WAS LIFTED SUNDAY. FIRST PRESS NOTICE OF ACCIDENT APPEARED TODAY - TWO BRIEF PARAGRAPHS TOGO-PRESSE BOTTOM FIRST PAGE REPORTING CRASH, STATING CAUSE UNDETERMINED, DEPLORING DEATHS OF THREE CREW MEMBERS, AND EXTENDING CONDOLENCES TO FAMILIES OF DECEASED. ARTICLE DID NOT CITE USA NATIONALITY OF TWO CREW MEMBERS. ONLY RADIO TOGO ANNOUNCEMENT CAME AT 0630 SATURDAY MORNING. IT WAS BRIEF AND FACTUAL AND EXTENDED CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY OF TOGOLESE COPILOT. IT APPEARS GOT BANNED ALL MEDIA COVERAGE UNTIL TODAY.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARBITRATION, DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LOME03003
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740377-0481
From: LOME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974125/aaaaadqp.tel
Line Count: 137
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 LOME 2997, 74 LOME 2988
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GRUMMAN CRASH: PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S COMMENTS
TAGS: CDES, EAIR, PFOR, TO, US, UV, ML, (EYADEMA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005